



FACT SHEET

AoA Mission and Programs

The Administration on Aging

The Administration on Aging (AoA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was created by the Older Americans Act (OAA) in 1965 with the promise that “under this program, every State and every community can move toward a coordinated program of both services and opportunities for older citizens.” Over the last 40 years since passage of the OAA, great strides have been made to fulfill this promise.

As the Federal focal point and lead agency for older persons and their concerns, AoA is responsible for policy development, program planning, and designing and delivering services that meet the needs of older Americans and their caregivers. Together with our partners in the public and private sectors, we support systems and programs that help older adults to remain healthy, happy, active, and engaged in their homes and communities. We develop more options and better choices for alternatives to institutional care. We promote the coordination and integration of services to seniors and their caregivers that offer higher quality, greater flexibility, and more consumer choice than ever before.

AoA implements grant programs and works in collaboration with a National Aging Services Network that is unparalleled in breadth and depth. Leading more than 29,000 partners at the state, tribal, local, and community levels, AoA also raises awareness among other Federal agencies and the general public of the need to plan now to care for and capitalize on older Americans as one of our nation's greatest assets.

The Mission of AoA

Our mission is to develop a comprehensive, coordinated and cost-effective system of long-term care that helps elderly individuals to maintain their independence and dignity in their homes and communities.



The Priorities of AoA

AoA is guided by a strategic plan that focuses our investment of effort and resources on five primary goals:

- Ensuring that older adults have access to an integrated array of health and social support services.
- Helping older individuals to remain active and healthy.
- Supporting families who care for their loved ones at home and in their communities.
- Ensuring the rights of older individuals and protecting them from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Promoting effective and responsive management.

The National Aging Services Network

AoA is the Federal leader of the National Aging Services Network. The Network is a human service delivery system of national, state, and local agencies working together to support older Americans in leading healthy, happy, independent lives at home and in their communities. The Network serves more than 8 million aging adults and more than 585,000 caregivers.

The Network includes 56 State Agencies on Aging, 655 Area Agencies on Aging, 243 tribal organizations, more than 29,000 local community service organizations, 500,000 volunteers, and a wide variety of national organizations who serve older adults.

Services Provided Under the Older Americans Act

To serve the growing number of older individuals and their diverse needs, the OAA provides a range of programs geared toward helping them maintain dignity and independence.

- **Supportive Services** enable communities to provide transportation for older individuals to medical appointments, grocery stores, senior centers, and other locations that support their physical, social, and psychological needs, while allowing them to live independent lives in their homes and communities. Supportive services also include housekeeping and personal care at home, and community programs such as adult day care. Additional services include information and assistance in identifying, navigating, and coordinating the myriad of programs and other resources available to older Americans.
- **Nutrition Services** allow older adults to receive prepared meals delivered to their homes ("Meals on Wheels"), and congregate meals served in group settings such as senior centers, adult day care centers, and places of worship.
- **Preventive Health Services** support community living through educational and service programs that help older individuals remain healthy and vibrant by maintaining healthy lifestyles. Components of preventive health services include physical activity, appropriate diet and nutrition, and regular health screenings.
- **National Family Caregiver Support** helps the millions of families who provide the primary care for spouses, parents, older relatives, and friends. National Family Caregiver Support Program services include:
 - Information about available services.
 - Assistance in gaining access to needed services.
 - Individual counseling, support groups, and training in problem-solving for caregivers.
 - Respite care to provide caregivers with temporary relief from their responsibilities.
 - Supplemental services to complement the care provided by family and friends.

The National Family Caregiver Support Program also serves the needs of grandparents caring for grandchildren, and for the caregivers of youth aged 19 and under with mental retardation or developmental disabilities.

- **Elder Abuse Programs** protect the rights of vulnerable older persons by detecting, investigating, and preventing elder abuse in long-term care facilities and communities. Elder Abuse Programs enhance the physical, mental, emotional, and financial well-being of older Americans. Services include financial and pension counseling and programs to combat consumer fraud. Long-term care ombudsmen provide legal assistance, investigation, and resolution of complaints made by and on behalf of residents of nursing homes, board and care facilities, and other long-term care settings.
- **Services to Native Americans** include nutrition and social support services designed to meet the unique cultural and social traditions of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.
- **Community Service Employment** fosters and promotes part-time community-service employment opportunities for low-income individuals who are 55 and older.

To Learn More

To learn more about AoA and its programs, visit www.aoa.gov. To find resources and support services through the National Aging Network, contact your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). In a few states, the State Agency on Aging serves as the AAA. You can locate your AAA or other local service provider through the AoA's Eldercare Locator, a nationwide toll-free information and assistance directory. Call the Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116, Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., EST. For 24-hour access to the Locator, visit www.eldercare.gov.

